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Country: USSR and Satellites

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CIA [REDACTED]

Subject: Copper Industry/Textile Production Goals/
Agricultural Chemistry Program

Place Acq: ----

Date: 13 January 1954

Date Acq : [REDACTED]

Supp to: _____

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Date of Info: 29 Dec 53 and earlier

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Source: [REDACTED]

1. The USSR Urals area copper industry is in the Soviet doghouse. Production by Urals mines and smelters has fallen far behind plans and technological development has not kept pace with other branches of the USSR's metallurgical and mining industries. (Primary copper production for the Soviet Union as a whole is slated to increase 90% under the current (Fifth) Five-Year Plan. This would mean boosting output from around 290 thousand metric tons in 1950 to over 550 thousand metric tons in 1955.) Listed below are the deficiencies:

Mechanization has lagged in a number of processes, including the preparation of materials for smelting, cleaning of blast pipes (tuyeres) of converters, and loading and unloading of copper.

Temperature control and regulation of smelting operations is not continuous and automatic but intermittent and manual.

Smelters have failed to make use of vast quantities of waste gases to preheat air fed into the furnaces. In one Central Urals plant alone, waste gases equivalent to heat

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obtainable from burning 30 thousand tons of coal is lost in a year.

Productivity of converters can be increased 25 to 40 per cent if oxygen blast is used, but this has not been accomplished in a single Sverdlovsk Province copper plant.

Large reserve capacities at copper plants and mines are not used due to inefficiency. Thousands of tons of copper and other valuable metals literally fly out the chimneys every year. Scientific-research organizations, which are concerned with these problems, have failed to work out more advanced technological methods.

Much dissolved copper is carried away by the mines' waste water because of poor methods of recovery. Much of the equipment intended for such recovery is run-down and neglected.

Leaching out of copper from depleted deposits has been poorly organized.

Productivity of special equipment is low and is often used only half the possible time. Because of neglect of hydrometallurgical methods of obtaining copper, its production by this means not only has not increased by comparison with prewar years but has actually decreased sharply.

Newest achievements of science and technology are adopted very slowly. Experience and progressive techniques of advanced plants and mines are not imitated by laggard establishments.

2. Because of low production by copper mines in the Sverdlovsk area, ore must be imported from other regions in large quantities to maintain high-level operations at local smelters.
3. Roumania has announced the following textile production goals:
 - 1954 - cotton cloth, 210 million meters
woolen cloth, 30 million meters
 - 1955 - cotton cloth, 250 million meters
woolen cloth, 32 million 500 thousand meters

I believe this is one of the first times specific figures have been used rather than meaningless percentages in disclosing annual output goals in Roumania. The satellites are apparently following the USSR in this regard.

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4. The USSR is making heavy new demands on agricultural chemistry in an effort to remedy a serious lag in Soviet food production. Sharp increases in the production of fertilizers, chemical additives for animal food, plant growth stimulants and inhibitors, defollients, herbicides and pesticides have been decreed for each year through 1964. At the same time, the manufacturers of agricultural chemicals have been ordered to improve the quality of their products and to cut costs.
5. In announcing the new agricultural program, Soviet officials admitted that food production is not keeping pace with the USSR's population and industrial growth. The officials noted that whereas the USSR's manufacturing output increased 130% from 1940 to 1952, food production gained only 10%. Their explanation of this situation is that Soviet agricultural chemistry during recent years has lagged behind the growing requirements of its economy.
6. Despite a number of improvements, testing and utilization of new fertilizers and agricultural poisons is still slow.

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